

## ALCOHOL & DRUG USE

### Fact Sheet

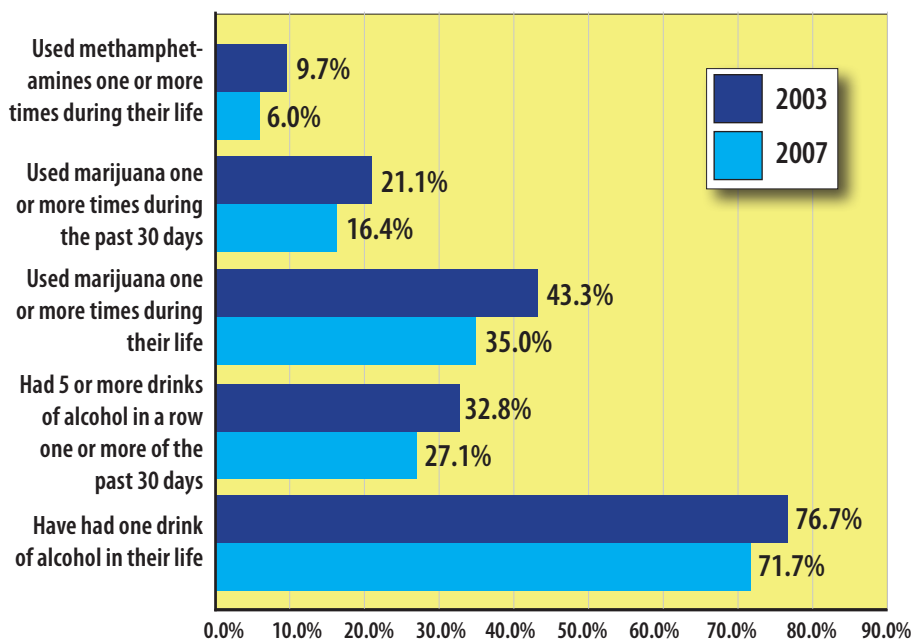
#### Alcohol & Drug Use

Among youth, the use of alcohol and other drugs has been linked to unintentional injuries, physical fights, academic and occupational problems, and illegal behavior. Long-term alcohol misuse is associated with liver disease, cancer, cardiovascular disease, and neurological damage as well as psychiatric problems such as depression, anxiety, and antisocial personality disorder.<sup>1</sup> Kentucky students seem to experiment with alcohol and drugs early in life with 10.2% having tried marijuana before age 13 and 25.1% having drunk alcohol before age 13. Kentucky students also have some of the highest rates in the country of having ever taken steroids (6.1%) and having ever used illegal injection-drugs (3.6%).

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/alcoholdrug/index.htm>. Retrieved 7/28/08.

#### Statistically Significant Changes in Alcohol & Drug Use in Kentucky

This graph represents behaviors in adolescent alcohol and drug use that have had statistically significant changes from 2003 to 2007.



The YRBS is a nationwide survey produced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH) to monitor the six critical health behaviors of adolescents: alcohol and drug use, injury and violence (including suicide), tobacco use, nutrition, physical activity, and sexual risk behaviors. The data is collected from students in 9th through 12th grades every two years. In 2007, Kentucky was able to obtain weighted high school data.

#### Youth Disproportionately at Risk

- Males (28.4%) are more likely than females (21.3%) to have had their first drink of alcohol, other than a few sips, before age 13
- Whites (28.7%) are more likely than blacks (13.7%) to have had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row, that is, within a couple of hours, on one or more of the past 30 days
- Males (13.4%) are more likely than females (6.9%) to have tried marijuana before age 13
- Hispanic/Latinos (20.4%) are more likely than blacks (6.3%) and whites (8.3%) to have used any form of cocaine, including powder, crack, or freebase one or more times during their life
- Males (8.2%) are more likely than females (4.4%) to have used ecstasy one or more times during their life
- Hispanic/Latinos (15.9%) are more likely than blacks (6.9%) and whites (5.5%) to have taken steroid pills or shots without a doctor's prescription one or more times during their life
- Hispanic/Latinos (41.7%) are more likely than blacks (22.6%) and whites (26.9%) to have been offered, sold, or given an illegal drug by someone on school property during the past 12 months

#### For More Information

For additional KY YRBS data and other YRBS fact sheets, visit the KDE website at: <http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Administrative+Resources/School+Health/Youth+Risk+Behavior+Survey.htm>

For national data or more information on the YRBS, visit the CDC website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>